

Jazz vocalist Laura Karst releases her second album, “Dancing in Darkness”, in 2022

“Laura Karst is a top-notch jazz singer who has a haunting voice and adventurous spirit... [She] digs into the lyrics... Some of these songs were originally composed as instrumentals but she makes the interval leaps with apparent ease... “Dancing in Darkness” has plenty of fine singing along with enough variety and surprising moments to hold one’s interest throughout.” --- L.A. Jazz Scene, August 2022 issue (Scott Yanow)

“The Bay Area singer with a velvet-smooth voice and a breezy delivery that feels comfortable dealing in jazz, swing, pop, Latin and more just released her second album, Dancing in Darkness.”

-- Bay Area News Group, June 2022 (Randy McMullen – Director of Arts & Entertainment)

“An artist with a wealth of talent and experience, Karst navigates these songs with much charm...and it’s all executed with incredible attention to detail... [“Dancing in Darkness”] unfolds with her diverse jazz vision on display...bright and pretty voice...very impressive singing... poetic pipes.” --- Take Effect Reviews, February 2023 (Tom Haugen)

“Warm-toned vocalist Laura Karst...[mixes] standards with some clever obscurities and some newer material, showing a wide range... Nice palate of colors for the canvas.” --- Jazz Weekly, March 2023 (George Harris)

“She’s a captivating vocalist... With her lovely voice and sensitive interpretations, Karst gives deep meaning to every line.” --- San Jose Mercury News / Bay Area News Group, September 2015 (Paul Freeman) – feature article about Laura:
“Singing Jazz at Just the Right Age”

“...wondrous and exciting... [She] sings with a joyous abandon.... a storyteller that has the innate ability to create a musical connection between herself and the audience... this is how you sing jazz!”

--- CriticalJazz.com (Brent Black) – 2010 review of Laura’s first album, “Little Did I Dream”

Laura Karst’s 2022 album release, *Dancing in Darkness*, comprises songs by an international array of jazz composers and a variety of jazz styles: swing, bebop, ballads, Latin, modern, and fusion, occasionally treating listeners to Laura’s impeccably pronounced French and Portuguese singing.

Personnel:

Laura Karst – vocals
Walter Bankovitch – piano & Rhodes electric piano
Noriyuki Ken Okada – acoustic and electric bass
Greg German – drums and percussion
Modesto Briseno – trumpet and flugelhorn

Producer and Musical Director - Roger Letson
Engineered and mixed by Gabriel Shepard,
25th Street Recording – Oakland, CA
Mastered by Gary Mankin – San Francisco, CA

Track list:

1. It’s Your Dance (Israel) [5:04]
John Carisi & Ray Passman (Beechwood Music Corp.)
2. Errática [3:24]
Caetano Veloso (Terra Enterprises, Inc.)
3. Not You Again [5:35]
Duncan Lamont (David Platz Music, Inc.)
4. Bittersweet [3:50]
John Bianculli & Connie Bryson (Hotsprings Music / Meter Maid Music)
5. Winter Sweet [6:22]
Kenny Wheeler & Norma Winstone (Metisse Music)
6. Footprints [8:24]
Wayne Shorter, Giazonne Reyes & Theo Jackson (Miyako Music)
7. Busy Being Blue [4:39]
Peter Eldridge & Jack Donahue (Reuben’s Tunes / Two Maples Music)

8. Beloved (Daahoud) [5:25]
Clifford Brown & Meredith d’Ambrosio (Second Floor Music)
Vocalese written by Denise Donatelli
9. A Dream Come True [7:21]
Tony Lakatos & Masha Bijlsma
(Cronemeyer Editions / Laika Records Publishing)
10. Dans mon île [4:47]
Henri Salvador & Maurice Pon (Round Hill Works)
Flute: Laura Karst
11. Quiet Afternoon [6:24]
Zbigniew Namyslowski (Mmo Music Group / Vebeque Music)

Laura Karst – Biography

Music critics and fans praise Laura Karst’s warm and smooth alto voice, her interpretation of lyrics as a true storyteller, and her versatility as a singer of a wide range of jazz styles, and in a variety of languages. She can swing hard and scat, or get an infectious bossa nova or samba groove going, and she will hold you emotionally captive as she sings her ballads.

San Francisco Bay Area jazz vocalist Laura Karst used to surprise her audiences when they learned that, by day, she was the chair of a prominent college’s French department, up until her retirement in 2017. She enjoyed her day job, but singing jazz has been her greatest love for the past 20+ years. Laura is a seasoned solo performer, having headlined in a number of Bay Area jazz venues, including The Tabard Theatre in San José, Angelica’s Main Stage in Redwood City, the Octavia Lounge jazz club in San Francisco, Café Pink House jazz club in Saratoga, the Lobby Lounge of the San José Fairmont, Tarragon in Sunnyvale, and Sumika in Los Altos. In 2017, Laura was the invited Guest Artist at the Hilo Bay Café in Hawai’i, and she has also performed in numerous jazz clubs in Paris, such as Autour de Midi et Minuit, Péniche le Marcounet, Le Caveau des Légendes, Le Café Universel, and La Crêperie ELO. As an ensemble singer, Laura has sung in the 5- and 6-voice vocal jazz groups, Vocal Flight and JAZZ-ology, winning First Place at the Reno Jazz Festival and multiple national awards from DownBeat Magazine during Laura’s tenure with them. With JAZZ-ology, Laura has performed in jazz clubs in Manhattan, NY, and in Paris, Lyon, and Grenoble, France. She is a lyricist as well, collaborating primarily with the award-winning European jazz composer and vocalist, Loïs Le Van, whose album “Vind”, featuring exclusively Laura’s lyrics, was selected as Album of the Month by Jazz News Magazine in October 2019, with the comment that the lyrics “blend poetry with music”. Laurent Bonnefoy of *Jazz In* and *Radio 16* (France) wrote of those lyrics, “[Karst] chisels the texts into genuine stories containing powerful messages”.



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“Dancing in Darkness” release concert,
June 26th, 2022 – Tabard Theatre, San José, California
(photo: © Doug Peterson)